

Prescription Pain Medication Deaths in Utah:

Trends and What Utah is Doing to
Stop This Epidemic

By Erin Johnson, MPH

Overview

- ▶ Where does Utah fall in the National trends?
- ▶ How can I use prescription pain meds safely?
- ▶ What is being done in Utah to stop this epidemic?

Is Utah the Highest?

- ▶ Highest in using pain relievers for non-medical purposes?
- ▶ Highest amount of Rx drug in circulation?
- ▶ Highest number of ED visits?
- ▶ Highest number of deaths?

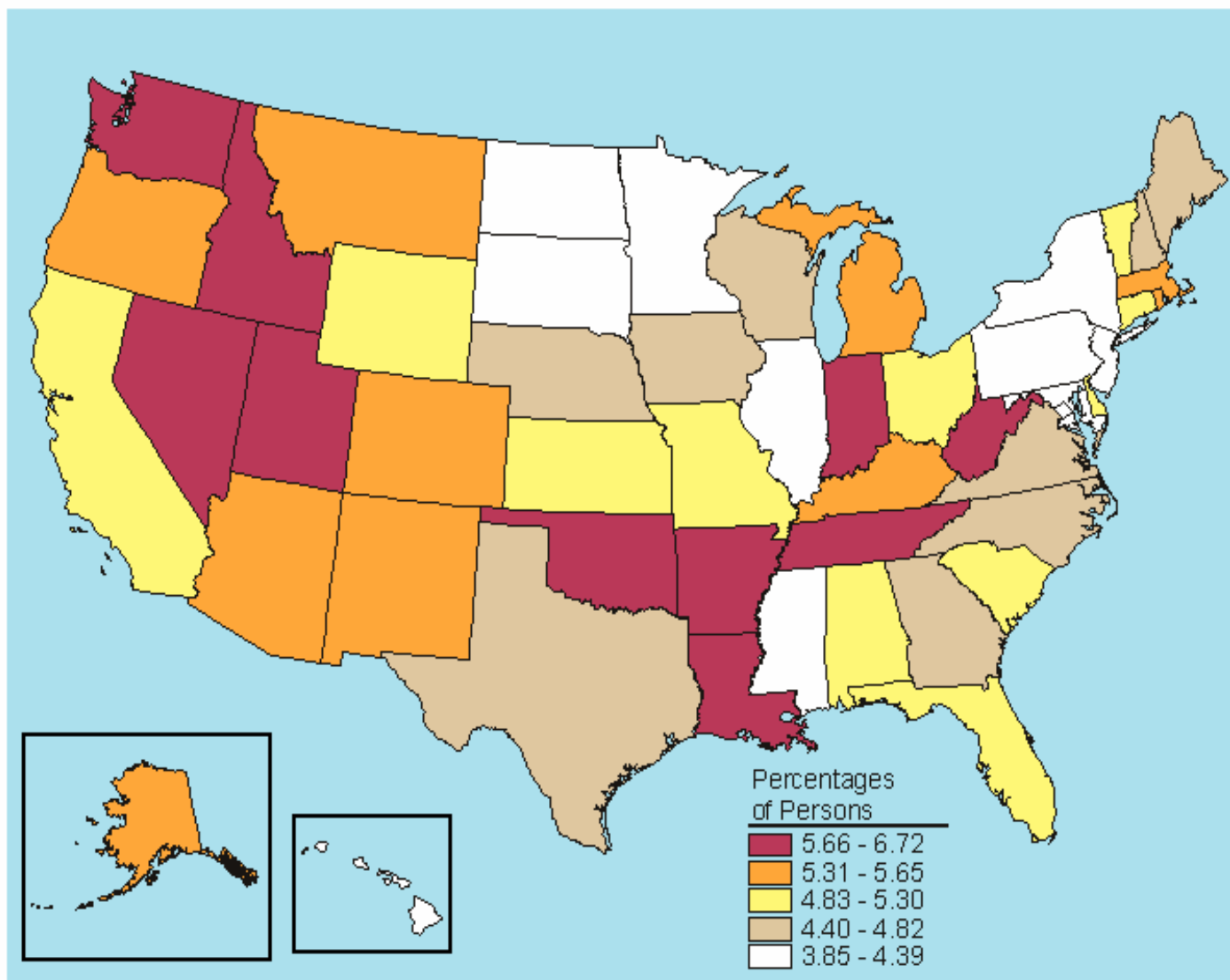


Highest in using pain relievers for nonmedical purposes?

- ▶ In 2005-2006, number of persons aged 12 or older using pain relievers for nonmedical purposes in the past year.
 - National Average: 5.00%
 - Arkansas: 6.35%
 - Nevada: 6.15%
 - Oklahoma: 6.7%
 - Tennessee: 6.23%
 - Utah: 6.21%
 - Washington: 6.13%



Nonmedical Use of Pain Relievers in Past Year among Persons Aged 12 or Older, by State: Percentages, Annual Averages Based on 2005 and 2006 NSDUHs





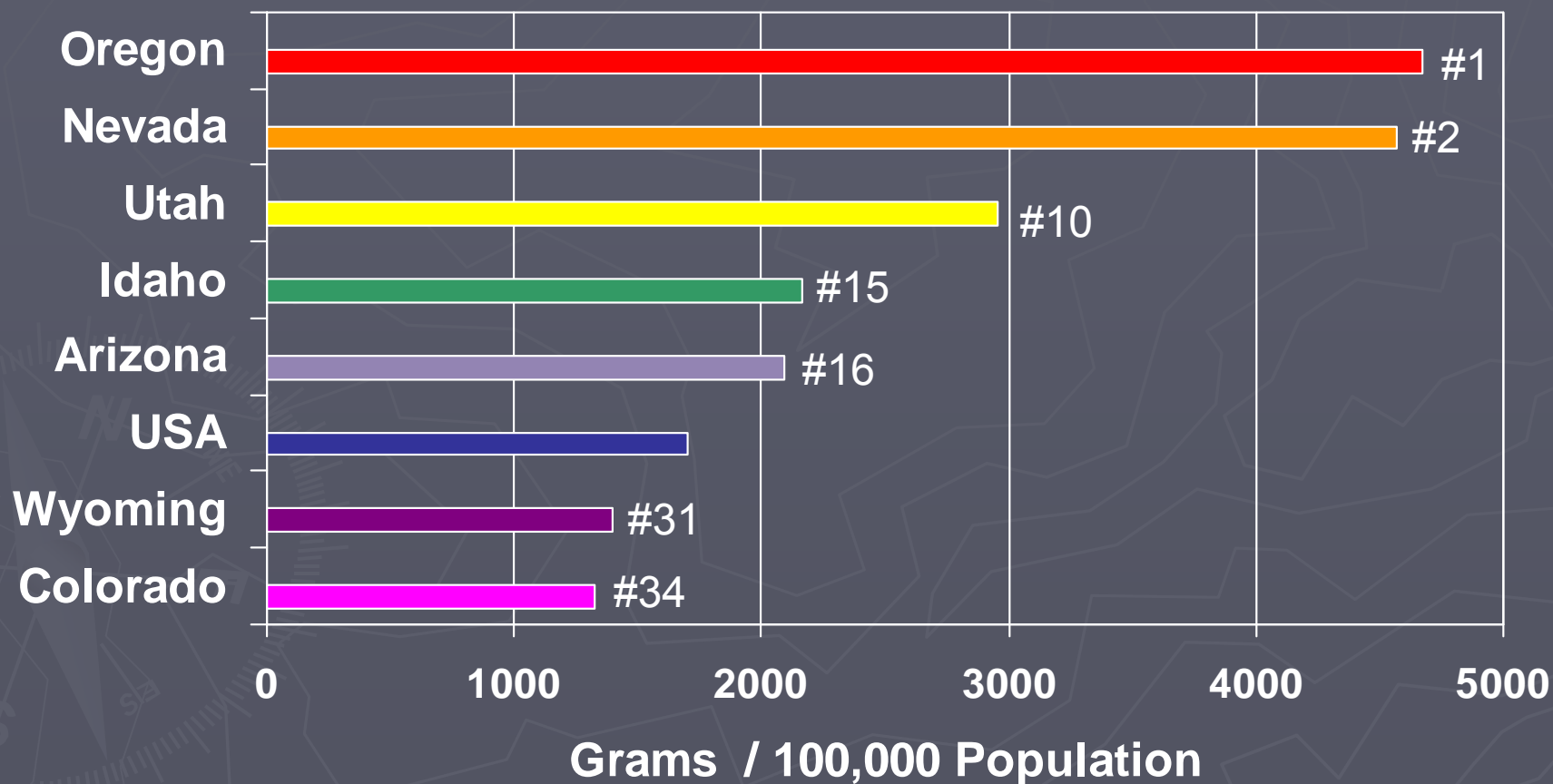
Non-Medical Use of Pain Relievers in Past Year

- ▶ Age 12-18: Utah ranks 19th
- ▶ Age 18- 25: Utah ranks 31st
- ▶ Age 26 or older: Utah ranks 2nd
- ▶ Overall: Utah ranks 4th for age 12 and older

Highest Amount of Rx Drugs in Circulation



Retail Distribution of Methadone in the Intermountain West and the USA, 2004



ARCOS 2004 data



Highest Number of ED Visits?

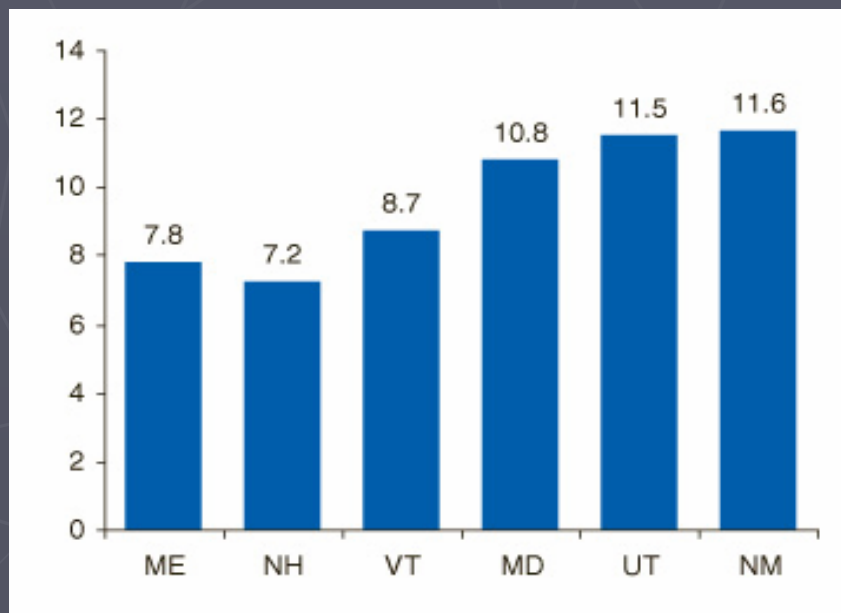
- ▶ Information not broken down by state
- ▶ For 2005, 598,542 ED visits involved nonmedical use of prescription or OTC pharmaceuticals or dietary supplements in US.
- ▶ 33% of nonmedical-use visits were for opiate/opioid analgesics
 - Hydrocodone/combinations in 51,225 ED visits (CI: 37,416 to 65,033),
 - Oxycodone/combinations in 42,810 ED visits (CI: 30,672 to 54,948), and
 - Methadone in 41,216 ED visits (CI: 29,249 to 53,184).

DAWN (Drug Abuse Warning Network) 2005

Highest Number Of Deaths?

- ▶ Only have data from six states:
 - Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maryland, Utah, and New Mexico

Opiate-related Drug Misuse Deaths
per 100,000 population: 2003

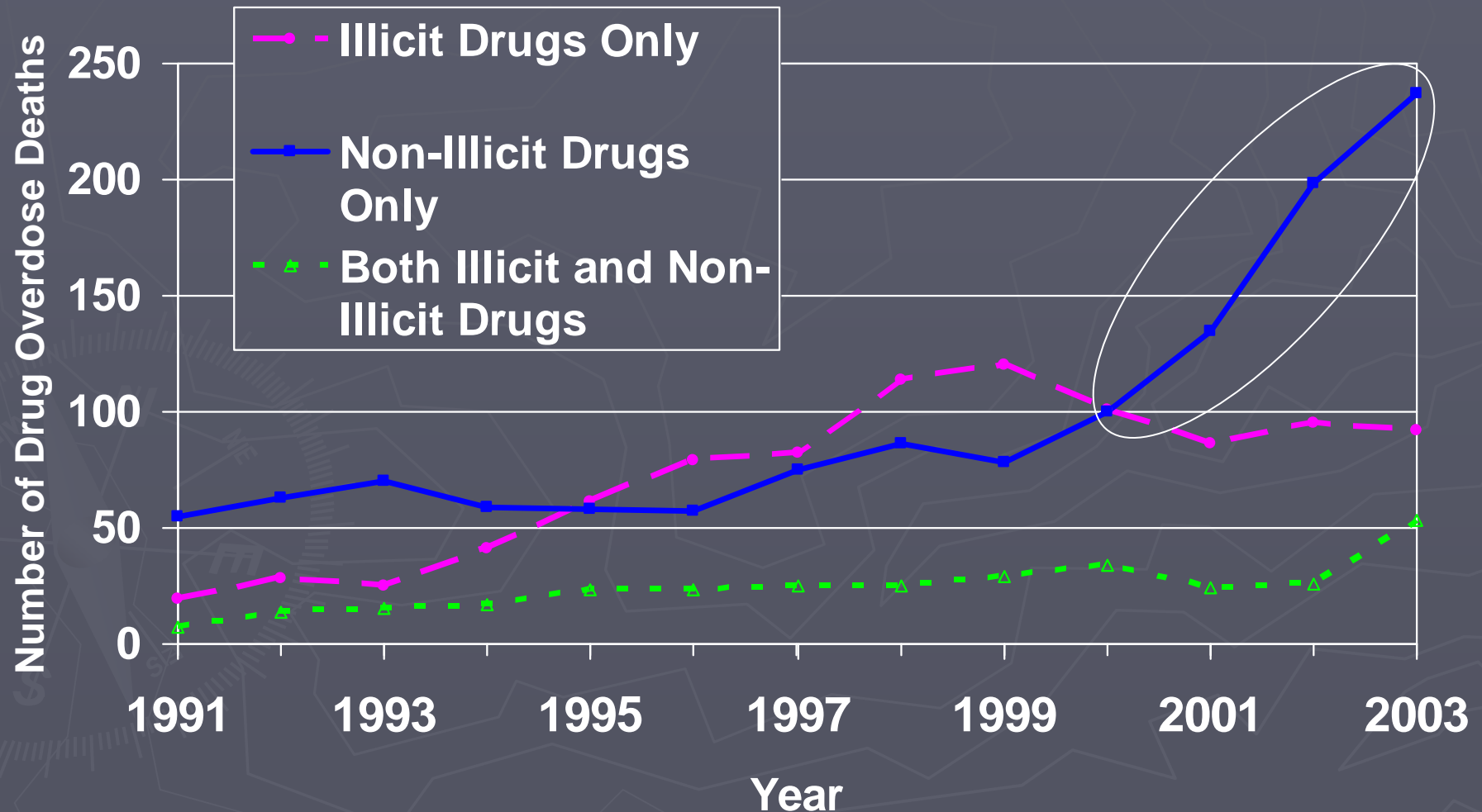


Why is Utah Different?

- ▶ Utah population of reported mis-users is older
- ▶ Other theories:
 - Different ways of coping
 - ▶ Less alcohol consumption
 - Stigma of addiction
 - ▶ Don't recognize or admit to problem
 - ▶ Don't seek help



Number of Drug Poisoning Deaths by Drug Category and Year — Utah 1991-2003



Drug Overdose in 2006

485 fatal overdoses
investigated by OME

Mean age = 40 years

96 illicit drugs only

Mean age = 35.4 yrs

Range 16-59

76% male

66% undetermined
intent

58% involve heroin

57% involve cocaine

12 counties

63 combination of
illicit and non-illicit

Mean age = 34 yrs

Range 18-61

71% male

98% undetermined intent

36% involve morphine
(heroin?)

66% involve cocaine

12 counties

307 non-illicit drugs only

Mean age = 41.9 yrs

Range 16-80

51% male

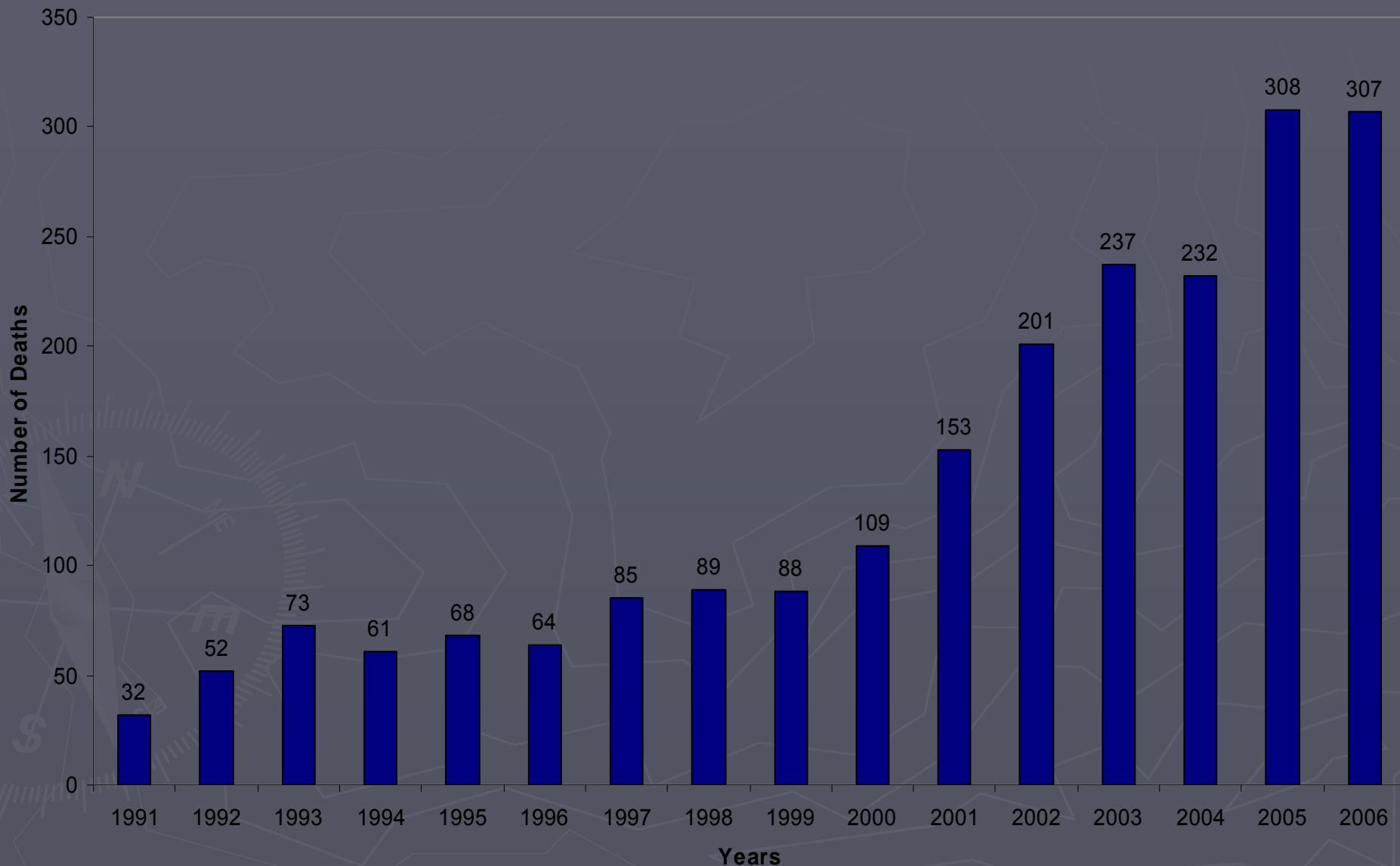
67% undetermined intent

56% involve rx narcotics

30% involve methadone

24 counties

Number of Non-Illicit Drug Overdose Deaths Recorded in the Medical Examiner Database, Utah 1991-2006



Results for 2004 & 2005

2004

- ▶ 128 illicit
 - 97 heroin
 - 75 cocaine
 - 48 methamphetamine
- ▶ 229 non-illicit
 - 117 methadone
 - 105 Rx narcotics
 - ▶ 59 oxycodone
 - ▶ 42 hydrocodone
 - ▶ 9 fentanyl
- ▶ 33 combination
- ▶ 24 undetermined

2005

- ▶ 127 illicit
 - 101 heroin
 - 83 cocaine
 - 45 methamphetamine
- ▶ 268 non-illicit
 - 159 Rx narcotics
 - ▶ 74 oxycodone
 - ▶ 56 hydrocodone
 - ▶ 30 fentanyl
 - 113 methadone
- ▶ 41 combination
- ▶ 32 undetermined

How Do I Use Prescription Pain Meds Safely?





1. Never take a prescription painkiller unless it is prescribed to you.
2. Do not take pain medicine with alcohol.
3. Do not take more doses than prescribed.
4. Use of other sedative or anti-anxiety medications can be dangerous.
5. Avoid using narcotic medications to facilitate sleep.
6. Lock up prescription painkillers.

What's Being Done in Utah?

HB 137: Pain Medication Management & Education

July 2007-July 2009

Legislative Charge

- Research
 - Causes, risk factors, solutions
 - Educate
 - Health care providers
 - Patients
 - Insurers
 - General public
 - Create Guidelines
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Collaboration

- ❑ Steering Committee (11)
 - Meets monthly
 - ❑ Advisory Committee (106)
 - Open to all interested parties & stakeholders
 - Meets quarterly
 - ❑ Work Groups
 - Patient and Community Education (25)
 - Policy, Insurance, Incentives (12)
 - Data, Research, Evaluation (7)
 - ❑ www.health.utah.gov/prescription
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RESEARCH





Research

☐ Deaths:

- Descriptive data
- How many people had a valid Rx at time of death?
- How many decedents' Rx matched what was found in system?

☐ Next steps:

- Emergency Department visits
 - Breakdown of deaths by specialty
 - Identifying Risk Factors (interviews)
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EDUCATION

R_x

Use only as directed.

Education: Health Care Providers

- Provider Behavior Change:
 - Small group trainings
 - Conferences/ Large group sessions
 - Mailings
-

Education: Patients & General Public

- Community Presentations
 - Producers of “Happy Valley”
 - Raise awareness; break the stigma
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Use only as directed.

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- ❑ Media Campaign Jan 2008-Jan 2009
 - Public Opinion Survey
 - [TV spot](#)
 - [Radio spot](#)
 - Decals, posters, brochures
 - Website: www.useonlyasdirected.org
 - Prescription Awareness Week (end of October)
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GUIDELINES



Guidelines

- ☐ Identified top scientifically-based guidelines
 - ☐ Expert Panel
 - ☐ Implementation Panel
 - ☐ Press conference to release guidelines
 - ☐ Timeline: July 31, 2008
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Other State-wide Efforts

- ☐ Clean out the Cabinet
 - ☐ Zero Deaths
 - ☐ Reckitt-Benkiser (Suboxone)
 - ☐ Substance Abuse priority topic for SPF-SIG grant
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